

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

S E C R E T STATE 106181

FOLLOWING REPEAT ROME 6918 ACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN
BRASILIA BUENOS AIRES CANBERRA CAPE TOWN GENEVA HONG KONG
LONDON MOSCOW OTTAWA PARIS PEKING TAIPEI TEHRAN TEL AVIV
TOKYO 20 MAY

QUOTE

S E C R E T ROME 6918

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TECH, IN, IT

SUBJECT: INDIAN NUCLEAR TESTING

REF: STATE 104647

1. (A) ITALIAN MEDIA HAVE DEVOTED MODERATE ATTENTION TO INDIAN
NUCLEAR TEST WITH COVERAGE THUS FAR LARGELY CONFINED TO STRAIGHT
REPORTING. COMMENTARY WHICH HAS APPEARED CONCENTRATES ON POLITICAL
IMPLICATIONS OF TEST BOTH IN TERMS OF PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

AND SINO-SOVIET BALANCE OF POWER IN FAR EAST AS WELL AS EFFECT ON
INDIAN ECONOMY. MOST PAPERS SKEPTICAL OF INDIAN CLAIMS FOR PEACE-
FUL USE.

(B) ALTHOUGH GOI IS NPT SIGNATORY, WE DO NOT EXPECT THAT

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ROME WILL INDICATE ANY SIGN OF DISPLEASURE TO NEW DELHI UNLESS

STRONGLY URGED TO DO SO IN MULTILATERAL CONTEXT.

(C) GIVEN DEMONSTRATED GOI INCLINATION TO PROCEED WITH NO MORE THAN DELIBERATE SPEED TOWARD RATIFICATION OF NPT (AND SAFE-GUARDS AGREEMENT), WE CALCULATE THAT ITALIANS WILL LIKELY SEIZE ON INDIAN TEST TO REINFORCE THEIR DISPOSITION TO MOVE SLOWLY IN THIS AREA. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, BELIEVE GOI WILL USE TEST AS EXCUSE TO HALT RATIFICATION PROCESS COMPLETELY SINCE THEY ARE FORMALLY

COMMITTED TO THIS GOAL, ARE ANXIOUS NOT TO DISRUPT PROVISION OF NUCLEAR

MATERIALS AND UNDOUBTEDLY FEEL UNDER SOME OBLIGATION TO THEIR EURATOM PARTNERS TO MOVE AHEAD. OPPONENTS OF NPT RATIFICATION IN ITALIAN PARLIAMENT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY FEEL STRENGTHENED BY INDIAN TEST, BUT WE DOUBT THAT THEIR FORCES WILL BE SUFFICIENT TO CARRY THE DAY ONCE THE TREATY COMES UP FOR A VOTE.

(D) US STANCE TOWARD INDIA IS LIKELY TO HAVE ONLY NEGLIGIBLE EFFECT ON GOI ATTITUDE TOWARD NPT RATIFICATION. VOLPE UNQUOTE RUSH

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